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NSC BRIEFING

8 June 1954

MAY REPORT ON SOVIET ACREAGE EXPANSION PROGRAM

A. Background

1. Sowing plan to put virgin land into grain cultivation by 1954 of 6 million acres has been exceeded.
2. This area is about the size of the state of Massachusetts.
3. The plan calls for 30 million acres of new land to be put into grain cultivation by 1955.
4. This area is about the size of the state of North Carolina.
5. About 100,000 workers are to be settled in the new area by 1955.
6. In this sparsely populated region living arrangements for workers has to be improvised and "tent cities" are going up rapidly.
7. Soviet plants are to ship half of the current production of heavy tractors to this reclamation project and commensurate amounts of other equipment.
8. A similar program for reclaiming virginal soil for grain cultivation has been unsuccessful on two past occasions.
9. The success of this program to increase grain output hinges largely on favorable weather conditions.

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A. Altai area acreage expansion

1. Wheat sowing plan overfulfilled for this year by substantial margin.

2. Fodder grains sowing exceed plan by 81 percent.

B. Kazakhstan acreage expansion exceeds goal by slight margin

C. Virgin lands tilled this spring exceed planned goal by more than 50% in these areas

D. Varied weather conditions from good to bad noted throughout USSR

E. Conclusions

1. Altai and Kazakhstan are the two most important regions in the new acreage expansion program.
2. Surpassing goals in these two areas indicates that over-all goals will be exceeded.
3. Initial difficulties for supplying machinery and manpower have been overcome for this year in at least these two important areas.
4. Plan expansion for 1954 of 6 million acres for the country as a whole is less than 20 percent of the total plan expansion of 30 million acres for 1954-1955.
5. Prospects for production that can be expected from this area is not clear. Precipitation over winter months for most of the new area was at or below normal. Weather conditions for May, June and July are deciding factors as to success of program.